

**REMARKS**

The amendment amends claims 1, 2, 3, 10, 14-19, 37, 40, 45, 48, 52, and 56; cancels claims 28-36, 57, and 58; and adds claims 59 and 60. Claims 1-27, 37-56, 59, and 60 are pending although claims 11, 24, 29-36, 47, 49, 50, 51, and 58 are withdrawn.

**Restriction Requirement**

The Action withdrew claims 11, 24, 29-36, 47, 49, 50, 51, and 58 from consideration, and examined other claims that were previously subject to restriction. Claim 48 was neither listed among the withdrawn nor the examined claims on page 2 of the Action. Clarification is requested.

**Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 102, 103**

The Action rejected all of the pending claims as anticipated or obvious over U.S. Patent Nos. 1,222,094; 2,937,905; and 6,536,849 to Frommann, Altenburger, and Okajima and JP 60-38201, alone or in combination.

Frommann shows a wheel with threadless spokes that can all be tightened at once using the Frommann hub.

Altenburger shows anchor elements 32 that are mounted within the hub in one of two ways depending on the spoke location. The anchor elements 32 have a recessed hole that holds an enlarged head of a spoke nipple within the anchor

element.

Okajima shows a reinforcement member 48 that attaches to an angled spoke head that is attached through the sidewall of a bicycle wheel rim.

JP '280, as best understood, shows a nipple 3a engaged within a rim.

None of these references show or suggest what is now claimed, either alone or combination. These remarks address differences between the claim elements and the prior art.

**Claims 1-14, 59, and 60**

Claim 1, as amended, claims that “the spoke attachment element is substantially fixed with respect to the seat due to transverse contact between the spoke attachment element and the side of the rim.” None of the cited reference show or suggest this limitation.

Fromann's flat spokes do not rotate because their flattened *spoke* shape cannot rotate within its corresponding flat slot. Fromann does not show or suggest an element that is fixed due to the claimed “transverse contact between the spoke attachment element and the side of the rim.”

Altenburger's anchor element 32 is discouraged (not prevented) from rotation because of its engagement within the recess 33. The anchor element 32 does not engage the rim's side as claimed, and further, the anchor element 32 can rotate

within the rim (see Figures 6-8), in contrast to being “substantially fixed” as claimed. Altenburger’s anchor’s rotation makes for a clumsy installation, as the anchor element 32 needs repeated reseating within the recess 33.

Okajima does not show or suggest preventing rotation and indeed, the mating circular shapes of the reinforcement element 48 and hole 76 encourage rotation within the hole 76.

Regarding claim 10, none of the references show the claimed “one notch [in the plate] for receiving the an elongated portion of the spoke in the insertion position.” Altenburger shows a recessed seat 15, but it is located on the rim, and in is made to seat the nipple’s head, which is different than what is claimed. Altenburger’s anchor element 32 does not have the claimed “notch” either. The other cited references do not show or suggest such a “notch.”

Regarding claim 14, JP ‘201 does not show or suggest a gasket that extends “along a portion of the spoke attachment element and through the opening in the second configuration.” The advantage of the claimed configuration is that the gasket prevents the ingress of moisture and dirt within the opening, which prevents corrosion both in the plate and in the rim.

Regarding claim 59, none of the references show or suggest a spoke attachment element that does not extend outside of the rim. Altenburger and

Okajima both show elements that extend *through* the rim.

Regarding claim 60, none of the references show or suggest that the head cannot pass within the plate. Altenburger's head is contained *within* the anchor element 32; Okajima's head is similarly located *within* the reinforcement member 48. Both of the prior art embodiments encourage rotation of the anchor/reinforcement element when the nipple rotates, a feature that hinders installation.

The remaining claims depend from at least one of the above-mentioned claims, and are allowable at least for the reasons mentioned above.

#### **Claims 15-17**

Claim 15, as amended, claims "a plurality of circumferentially extending seat openings formed in a base and joined sides." These are not shown or suggested in Frommann or Altenburger. Frommann teaches spokes engages within lips 16 extending outward from a rim, not "circumferentially extending seat openings formed in a base and joined sides" as claimed. Altenburger teaches rectangular holes 33 on the "base" of the rim, which do not extend "circumferentially" and are not formed in "sides of the rim," as claimed.

The remaining claims depend from at least one of the above-mentioned claims, and are allowable at least for the reasons mentioned above.

**Claims 17-27**

These claims are patentable for reasons similar to those discussed in claim 1.

**Claims 37-47**

Claim 37, as amended, claims “base facing spoke attachment elements” and “a plurality of plates, shaped to pass through the openings when positioned at a first angle and to effectively engage the seats in either of two orientations 180 degrees from each other about a longitudinal axis of the spokes.” This is not shown or suggested in Altenburger or Okajima. Altenburger’s anchor elements cannot be rotated 180 degrees; if they are, they are not “effective,” as the anchors in Altenburger must be aligned one way or the other (see Figure 10), as the elements in Altenburger are not symmetrical when viewed through the section shown in Altenburger Figure 8. The elements as claimed can be so rotated during installation, which is advantageous over Altenburger. Okajima does not cure this defect, for while the reinforcement elements in Okajima can freely rotate, they are not “base facing.”

Regarding claim 40, see the above argument with respect to claim 10 (notch).

Regarding claim 45, see the above argument with respect to claim 14 (gasket).

The remaining claims depend from at least one of the above-mentioned

**Applicant:** Meggiolan et al.  
**Application No.:** 10/663,560

claims, and are allowable at least for the reasons mentioned above.

**Claim 52**

Claim 52, as amended, claims the "sealing gasket." See the above argument with respect to claim 14.

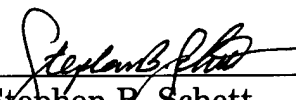
**Claim 56**

Claim 56 claims a "holding element" that is not shown or suggested in any of the cited art.

All of the pending claims, including those currently withdrawn, are believed to be in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that a telephone or personal interview would advance the prosecution of this application, the undersigned invites such a conference.

Respectfully submitted,

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**Application No.:** 10/663,560

**In the Drawings**

The Action objected to the drawings because they were at a “strange angle.” The Examiner indicated, by telephone, that the drawings may have been mis-copied or mis-scanned. Accordingly, this Amendment resubmits Figure 16, which is identical to originally filed Figure 16, and adds no new matter.